

As always, even after having been defeated in the international forums and by FCC decree, the ARRL opposes the entire rest of the world in the elimination of all 1920's Morse Code exam requirements and will do anything it can do to turn back the clock to the "good 'ol days" of spark. It is a completely reactionary organization.

Ham radio is dying of "old age". Go to any hamfest and do a rough estimate of the average age of all the hams at the event. Keep in mind that old people do NOT like to travel, which tips the scale TOWARDS young people and it makes your discovery even worse. There are very FEW young people at any hamfest. I estimate the average age of hams at around "baby boomer" age....about 60 years old....now. Young people have stopped coming into the hobby. Why should they? The very fact that I'm sending you this digital message at 3Mbps over my broadband cable connection negates the entire need for them to "study hard and you can become a ham" so you can be pissed on, cursed at, told to get the hell off my private frequency and other nastiness you hear from the old farts on every ham band we have. The ARRL, who represent the old hams pissing on the new hams, is doing exactly what the majority of its membership wants. "Get them damned kids off my ham band!" It always has, and always will.....

But, alas, ARRL has another problem on its hands. The old farts USED to be in control of the FCC, the FCC employees who ran the FCC. This is no longer true. FCC is now run by a liberal bunch of lawyers and career bureaucrats installed at the highest level by the cable, broadcast and telephone industries. Only the ham radio low-level bureaucrat hams are left. They will do as they are TOLD, or face the consequences. They have also, of late, displayed an attitude that is trying to SAVE ham radio, not reserve it for the 70-year-olds who have been on it since the 1950's....you know, like me. The new FCC bureaucrats have displayed an independence from ARRL's supposed influence never before seen. The old FCC, all ARRL cronies, just did what ARRL wanted, not what was good for ham radio. This, too, is no longer true.

MORSE CODE IS DEAD. All the nostalgia in the world will not revive Morse Code or riding in carriages towed by horses or gas lamps in the living room. The previous use of Morse Code to punish newcomers and to try to discourage them from being ham radio operators by those who were in control, the ARRL, is no longer acceptable to the FCC or the international community. The USA is one of only a few countries who are dragging their geriatric asses in eliminating this old "newcomer filter", to the detriment of the hobby....and it is a HOBBY. I'm sorry, but that is just the facts. MORSE CODE IS DEAD. If those nostalgists wish to continue to use Morse Code for their own enjoyment of the hobby, I'm for that 100%, however I think it should be CONFINED to the bottom 25 Khz of the ham bands because, in fact, Morse Code is used as a jamming weapon on phone and digital users to taunt them by the geriatric hams who are jealous of hams using digital modes, especially. Anyone caught using Morse Code out of band would simply lose their license, immediately. The time to stop jamming a phone net by calling CQ over it in Morse is over. The time to stop jamming digital modes of communications the geriatric ham thinks should have never been allowed on ham radio because he is not interested in it, or is jealous of some mode he does not understand, is over. And the time to force all hams to learn some ancient

language the new ham will never use is also OVER.

As to the test.....

The ARRL is NOT a ham radio club, and hasn't been since the end of WW2. ARRL is a MAGAZINE COMPANY full of employees whos income depends on the MAGAZINE'S success. It is run by a board of directors who also have a pecuniary interest in the success of that magazine. W1AW is the only commercial ham radio station I know of. It is owned and operated by a MAGAZINE COMPANY, against FCC regulations. Its control operator is an EMPLOYEE of a CORPORATION who holds the license. This is illegal.

ARRL will do whatever it needs to do to SELL THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF MAGAZINES and, in the process, sell the maximum number of "memberships", which is just another word for "subscriptions". FOLLOW THE MONEY, just like in any other organization. To sell magazines, ARRL has a conflict. The old school's insistence that we keep Morse alive, and keep it on all the frequencies available to the hobby, conflicts with our pecuniary interest of QST sales. What do we do? If we continue to insist 20 wpm is what everyone must copy to get a ham license and become a "subscriber", the magazine will go belly up because it cannot support our bureaucracy with so few "subscribers". So, a business decision must be made to COMPROMISE between the two interests of the magazine company.....to keep the maximum number of subscribers we can, even though many old farts are going to dump it when things don't go their way. ARRL also knows these old farts are going to die very soon, so it must look ahead to the future of the organization, which is bleak at best because the hobby is on its last legs. Hence, the League's reluctant support for the 5 wpm Morse requirement back in 2000. It is the compromise between the old fart membership's reluctance to let go of a dying mode, fearful of the ensuing new influx of young hams on "THEIR HAM BANDS, DAMMIT"...and the magazine's need for new subscribers to continue as a profitable business supporting its employees....in total opposition to either interests.

ARRL used the FCC's new independence from their influence as the main tool in explaining to the old farts why the 20 wpm code requirement couldn't be "saved", in their interest. Of course, many of the old farts had no choice. They have life memberships and can't quit ARRL....or influence it with politics....anyway. ARRL may have staged this event if, in fact, they still have control of the FCC's ham radio bureaucracy, to support the pecuniary interest of the magazine business, its main source of funding.

See what happened and why ARRL acts the way it now acts? M-O-N-E-Y....just like any other organization on the planet.

What about my view? That's easy. The giveaway testing the ARRL supports must be stopped. The entire reason to give ham radio the cream-of-the-crop frequency spectrum it has always enjoyed was to encourage young people to study and learn ELECTRONICS. This pool of civilian, self-taught technicians is to be maintained for MILITARY READINESS. Ham radio operators proved invaluable to the military in World War Two. We could not have won the war without hams operating and maintaining our military command and control system, however

primitive it was. This "mission" of ham radio must be restored. As military electronics interests change, so must ham radio change. Hence, FCC must do what it can to encourage parallel modes of communications on ham radio to military interests of the government it serves....DIGITAL. FCC must also be responsible to see that the military's needs for COMPETENT, READY TECHNICIANS is met, without question.

This requirement for technicians means the current giveaway technical testing whereby we give away the test for you to study the questions and answers to cheat your way through the needed requirement that you be an ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN to get on ham radio with a complete understanding of radio theory, electronic circuitry, propagation, etc....must stop immediately. Ham radio MUST have a reason for being and occupying so much spectrum space. THIS is the reason it exists. The very industries who wish to take over our ham bands, especially between 100-1000 Mhz must be shown that they, too, have a pecuniary interest in the health of ham radio....being able to hire competent technicians who got their start by becoming ham radio TECHNICIANS when they were young. We have lost this basic mission, and business and the military knows it. Ham radio has gotten soft at the hands of the magazine business...the ARRL.

All tests must be scrapped. New tests, tests designed to really test your technical skills and knowledge, must be implemented and kept totally secret, as they used to be, and changed very regularly to keep the magazines from publishing the question banks and bypassing the tests true purpose. The new tests will not be "for sale" by volunteer examiners and their organizations. The new tests will be proctored by FCC employees and local government employees, such as school teachers, college professors, persons who can be fired and jailed for compromising the tests. We don't let teenage drivers give the other teenagers the driving test, making it a mockery. Why should we let ham radio operators administer the ham radio tests? How silly. I understand there is a 5-year-old, whose father is some kind of ham radio guru, who is an EXTRA CLASS LICENSEE. There is no way a 5-year-old can pass all the elements, HONESTLY. What nonsense....either there was mass cheating going on....or the test has been softened to the point where we shouldn't even give it because it is a joke.

ONLY COMPETENT TECHNICIANS WITH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN ELECTRONICS SHOULD HAVE HAM LICENSES. Unskilled ham wives, who cannot fix anything, should be called on the cell phones designed for them.

So, a secret, hard, skills test, of ever-increasing skill level and the elimination of all Morse Code testing because the military has no interest in its practice, is what you need to get a Novice (all mode, >50 Mhz) ham license or Ham Radio License (all modes, all bands). Just two classes, one to get your feet wet and get you hooked, then one for all the marbles....with a pisser of a test only TECHNICIANS could ever pass, making holding a ham radio license a NATIONAL TREASURE that gives the government and industry great interest in making sure those TECHNICIANS have access to the ham bands, without the current constant threat of taking away the valuable frequencies for commercial interests that see it as a total waste of good radio space for a bunch of unskilled space cadets.

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